Regulator for Cable Operators

3740. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether in the wake of T.V. Channels becoming pay channels, price-war has recently started in Delhi and other towns between cable operators and subscribers ;

(b) if so, whether due to absence of any regulator, cable operators are now demanding and charging subscription arbitrarily without giving any receipt ;

(c) if so, the details thereof ;

(d) whether Government propose to introduce any foolproof mechanism for convenience of general public which indicates actual extra burden fallen on cable operators which should genuinely be shared by subscribers ;

(e) if so, whether, *inter-alia.* Government propose to appoint a regulator for the purpose ; and

(f) if so, by when ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (c) The rates of subscription for cable networks is purely a contractual affair between the subscriber and cable operators and is market driven. Government does not regulate the charges levied by Private Channels and cable operators.

(d) to (f) The existence of a large number of competing channels itself ensures protection of viewer interest which is further reinforced by existence of laws such as Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and the Consumer Protection Act, in addition to the MRTP Act. A proposed convergence legislation does have provisions to enable regulation; of Cable Networks.

Opening of Lokadalats at district level

3741. SHRI B. J. PANDA : Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the restructuring of the legal system in the country by opening Lok Adalats at district level is under consideration;

(b) if so, the matters expected to come within the purview of these Lok Adalats; and